



# NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## **Police arrest suspect in door-to-door solicitation scam**

*Encourage residents to be suspicious of unsolicited offers and services*

Howard County Police have arrested a suspect in connection with a door-to-door solicitation scam that occurred earlier this month.

Tabitha Nicole Sisk, 21, of Gladstone, Virginia has been charged with extortion, drug possession and making a false statement to police. Additional charges are pending for Sisk and two more suspects believed to be involved in the scam.

Through investigation, police learned that Sisk and two additional suspects were extorting money from a victim. The suspects approached the victim's home and offered yard and home improvement services for an excessive fee. The victim paid up front, but the services were never completed in a satisfactory manner. The suspects returned to the victim's home on several occasions in an effort to collect additional compensation. The investigation is ongoing.

The police department is encouraging residents to take precautions to avoid falling victim to similar solicitation scams. Police are urging those who have family members, friends, or neighbors that may be vulnerable to scams to share this message.

Citizens should be suspicious of unsolicited offers that require payment up front. Scammers will set a price and require immediate payment, but often will not follow through on the services promised. They may return and request additional compensation and will often fail to provide a contract.

Residents should also be wary of anyone who begins performing yard or home improvement services without their consent and then demands payment.

While some reputable companies do offer their services door-to-door, they are required to possess a Howard County peddler and solicitor identification card. Residents can request to see this ID in addition to a company ID.

The Office of Consumer Affairs recommends the following tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Don't feel pressured to make a decision on the spot.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Don't share personal or financial information.

The department reminds residents to never allow anyone they don't know inside their home. If you notice a suspicious person or vehicle in your neighborhood or if you believe you may have been the victim of a scam, call police at (410) 313-2200. If a crime is in progress, call 911.

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